



# Department of Justice

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## **DUTCH CITIZEN ARRAIGNED IN WASHINGTON, D.C., ON CHARGES OF TERRORISM CONSPIRACY AGAINST AMERICANS IN IRAQ**

WASHINGTON—An Iraqi-born Dutch citizen who was extradited from the Netherlands on Saturday made his initial appearance today in federal court in Washington, D.C., to face charges for allegedly participating in a conspiracy to attack Americans based in Iraq, announced Kenneth L. Wainstein, Assistant Attorney General for the National Security Division, Jeffrey A. Taylor, U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia, and Joseph Persichini Jr., Assistant Director in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Washington Field Office.

This case represents the first U.S. criminal prosecution arising from terrorist activities taking place in Iraq.

Wesam Al Delaema, a/k/a Wesam Khalaf Chayed Delaeme, was indicted by a grand jury in the District of Columbia in September 2005 and charged with six counts: conspiracy to kill U.S. citizens abroad; conspiracy to use a weapon of mass destruction (explosives); conspiracy to maliciously damage or destroy U.S. government property by means of an explosive; possession of a destructive device (explosives) during a crime of violence; conspiracy to possess a destructive device (explosives) during a crime of violence; and teaching or demonstrating the making or use of an explosive with the intent to further a crime of violence.

The indictment alleges that Delaema traveled from the Netherlands to Iraq in October 2003 and, together with a group of co-conspirators calling themselves the “Mujahideen from Fallujah,” declared his intentions to kill Americans in Iraq using explosives. The indictment further alleges that Delaema and his co-conspirators hid explosives in a road in the area of Fallujah, Iraq.

Delaema, 33, was born in Fallujah, Iraq. He was arrested by Dutch law enforcement authorities on May 2, 2005, and he initially faced similar charges in that country. Following his arrest, Dutch law enforcement and prosecution authorities worked cooperatively with the FBI in its investigation of Delaema’s alleged terrorist activities.

In September 2005, the United States filed a formal request with the Netherlands seeking Delaema’s extradition. The extradition request was subsequently granted by a Dutch court and then by the Dutch Ministry of Justice. In December 2006, the extradition request was sustained on appeal in the Netherlands. This past weekend, Delaema was flown to the United States, arrested, and taken into custody by the FBI.

Today in court, Delaema was arraigned and pleaded not guilty to the charges against him.

“After a lengthy extradition process, this defendant will now face justice for his efforts in orchestrating and launching roadside bomb attacks against our men and women serving in Iraq. We in the ranks of federal prosecutors are honored to play a role in protecting our military

colleagues against such deadly and cowardly attacks,” said Assistant Attorney General Kenneth L. Wainstein.

“We will continue to be vigilant in our efforts to bring to justice anyone who plots terrorist attacks against our citizens at home or abroad. We look forward to working cooperatively with the Dutch authorities in prosecuting this defendant under our criminal laws,” said U.S. Attorney Jeffrey A. Taylor.

“Today’s announcement of the extradition of Wesam Khalaf Chayed Delaema to the United States sends a clear message of the FBI’s unwavering dedication to our mission to detect, deter, and bring to justice any individual who conspires to commit terrorist acts against any U.S. citizen either in this country or on foreign soil. Together with the invaluable assistance of the Dutch National Police Agency and the Dutch Government, we were able to accomplish that mission,” said FBI Assistant Director in Charge Joseph Persichini Jr.

The investigation into this matter was conducted by the FBI’s Washington Field Office, with assistance from the Dutch National Police Agency and the National Office of the Public Prosecutor in the Netherlands. The Office of International Affairs in the Criminal Division of the U.S. Department of Justice coordinated the extradition efforts on behalf of the United States.

The prosecutors handling the case are Assistant U.S. Attorneys Gregg Maisel and Matthew Cohen of the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Columbia, and Trial Attorneys Gregg Sofer, Jerome Teresinski, and Marla Tusk of the Counterterrorism Section of the National Security Division at the Department of Justice.

If convicted of the charges in the criminal indictment, Delaema faces a maximum sentence of life in prison. An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant violated a criminal law. All defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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